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# Tacoma Academy of Science,

TACOMA, WASHINGTON.



PAPER BY

HON. JAMES WICKERSHAM.

## Is it Mount Tacoma, or Rainier?

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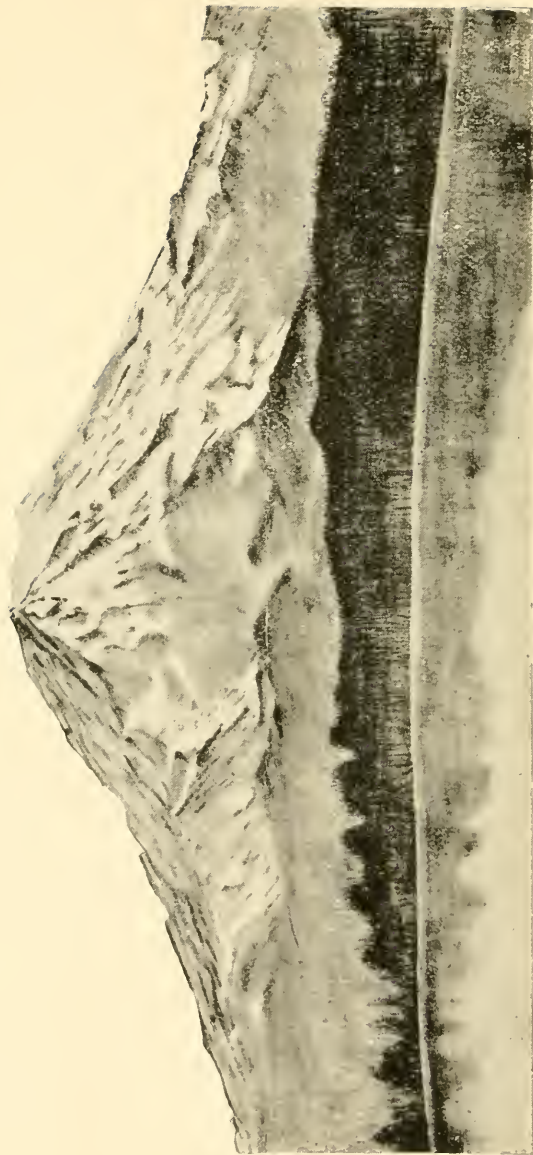
SECOND EDITION.

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TACOMA:  
NEWS PUBLISHING COMPANY.  
1893.







## MOUNT TACOMA.

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TACOMA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE.

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*Extract from the minutes of a stated meeting held on December 19, 1892.*

The Academy having convened with the President in the chair, a quorum being present, and the minutes of the last meeting having been read and adopted, \* \* \* \* \* a resolution was introduced by the Secretary, as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Hon. James Wickersham be requested to prepare a paper from the large amount of information he has collected on the subject of the origin of the name "Tacoma," with particular reference to its application by the aborigines to Mount Tacoma.

On motion the above resolution was unanimously adopted.

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
Tacoma Academy of Science,  
February 6th, 1893.

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The Academy convened in regular session, the President in the chair. A quorum being present, the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

The following prominent Indians representing the Puyallup, Nesqually and Klickitat tribes were seated on the platform: George Leschi, son of Quiemuth, a leader in the Indian war of 1855; Jack Simmons; John Hiaton, one of the patriarchs of the reservation, 80 years of age, and a signer of the treaty of 1854; Mrs. John Hiaton and John Powers.

On motion the rules were suspended and the Academy proceeded at once to the consideration of the paper of the evening entitled "Is it Mount Tacoma or Rainier—what do History and Tradition say?"

Judge Wickersham being presented by the President, addressed the Academy as follows:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE ACADEMY:

The recent action of President Harrison in reserving from disposal under the public land laws a tract of more than 700,000 acres surrounding Tacoma, the royal mountain peak, is of great interest to the people of Pierce county and the city of Tacoma. It is expected, of course, that this city will be the point to which all tourists will hereafter come on their way to examine the stupendous glaciers of this most lordly of American mountains, and it is consequently, of great interest to our people to see to it that everything concerning this park be well done—honestly, fairly and patriotically. It is the most famous mountain peak in our country; celebrated the globe over for its simple grandeur, and it behooves our people to protect it, and the park around it, jealously and with sleepless vigilance.

Little can be done now, but that little is of vast importance. A proper and fitting name for this great cone, and the park around it, must be officially announced. When this official announcement is once made it will be hard to change it. It will be used in song and story; in tradition and

history; poets, authors, tourists, newspapers and scientific bodies of the world will adopt it, and it will never change.

What name shall be forever perpetuated by being thus officially attached to this mountain peak? Shall it be called "Mount Rainier" or "Tacoma?" What do honesty, euphony, simplicity, poetry, tradition, history and patriotism require of us? Let us view the facts, try the cause, hear the evidence, and then decide.

In the preparation of this article no attention has been paid to literary effect; the only effort has been to obtain facts by the best method possible in such a case as this—by letters from prominent people who understand the facts, know our history, and talk the language of the Indians; by certificates signed by old Indians, who, of course, know the truth, and by an appeal to records, papers, books, and all honest sources of information. The writer has, during the last year, written the Puyallup-Nesqually Indian language, and has also preserved many of their myths, traditions and stories concerning this (to them) mysterious mountain. A special effort has been made to get a correct Indian nomenclature of this region, and to no name has so much attention been paid as to the Indian name of this high mountain, from the glaciers of which spring the waters of the White, Carbon, Puyallup, Nesqually and Cowlitz rivers.

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#### SPANISH DISCOVERIES.

More than a century ago, in 1774, the Spaniards saw the Olympic mountains and named Olympus, Sierra de Santa Rosalia. In 1790 they explored the hitherto fabulous straits of Anian, and entered a land-locked bay which they named Port Quadra. From Port Quadra they explored the waters of the great roadstead to the southeast, which they named Canal de Caamano. Rosario Straits, Galiano Island, Fidalgo Island, Caamano Island, and many other names are preserved by reason of these first explorers furnishing Vancouver with their maps and charts in 1792, when he visited the same waters. The Spaniards explored the exact spot in 1790, from which Vancouver named "Mount Rainier" in 1792. They lived for weeks in daily sight of Mount Baker, a name bestowed by Vancouver, because a member of his crew by that name was the first one of his expedition to see it. Did the Spaniards name "Mount Tacoma," and if so, what name did they give it? They saw it two years before Vancouver did, and his was not a discovery, but at best only a naming.

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#### ENGLISH DISCOVERIES.

In May, 1792, Vancouver entered the Straits of de Fuca and cast anchor in Discovery Bay, the Port Quadra of the Spaniards. Leaving his vessel here to repair, he explored what we now call Admiralty Inlet and Puget Sound in small boats. As the little fleet rounded the long sand point and coasted down into Port Townsend Bay, Vancouver records that a "very remarkably high, round mountain, covered with snow, apparently at the southern extremity of the distant range of snowy mountains before noticed, bore S. 45 E." Later on, while in the Canal de Caamano, of the Spaniards, in speaking of the range of mountains now known as the Cascades, he

says: "At its northern extremity Mount Baker bore by compass N 22 E.; the round, snowy mountain now forming its southern extremity, and which, after my friend, Rear Admiral Rainier, I distinguished by the name of 'Mount Rainier,' bore N. 42 E."

And thus, at a distance of over one hundred miles, Vancouver named this grand white-capped summit after a foreigner who represents nothing to our American civilization, and who not only never saw the mountain bearing his name, but who never saw the continent upon which it is so conspicuous a land mark. Vancouver held no communication with the Indians, and seemed to have had the greatest contempt for them, and made no effort to ascertain the names, if any they had, for the rivers, mountains, bays, and other natural features of this virgin world.

At every turn he fastened the name of an obscure friend (whose only claim to this high honor was an acquaintance with Vancouver) to some prominent feature in the Puget Sound landscape. Out of this medley the name of Rainier was thus bestowed by him on the most perfect cone in that long line of extinct volcanoes, standing cold and lifeless, in the great continental range. Vancouver explored and named Puget Sound, after his lieutenant, Peter Puget, and then sailed away to Nootka, never again to see the points upon which he so recklessly flung the names of his unknown friends; and this is the history of the name of "Mount Rainier."

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#### THE AMERICAN NAME.

Is "Tacoma" the American name for this mountain, and what does the word mean? Should "Tacoma" be perpetuated and "Rainier" abandoned? Is the one as honestly entitled to recognition as the other? Let the following eminent authorities answer the question.

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VANCOUVER, WASH., April 3, 1892.

*"Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.*

"DEAR SIR: Some time ago I received a note from you asking me to say where the word 'Tacoma' came from. The word belongs to the Scadgit Indian language, and means plenty of food or nourishment; and hence, a woman who had plenty of nourishment in her breasts was called 'Tacoma sladah,' or the 'motherly woman,' and in the course of time the nourishing breast of a woman was called 'Tacoma,' because it furnished plenty of food for the young, and the snow-capped mountains were called 'Haik-Tacomas,' because they resembled a woman's breasts, and were supposed to furnish plenty of nourishment to the lesser mountains. 'Haik-Tacomas,' the great mother of mountains.

"Tacoma, the Indian town, was so-called from the fact that plenty of natural food was easily obtained at that place, the mother of towns.

"The first author that I remember using the word was Theodore Winthrop; he called the snow peaks 'Tacomas.'

I am most respectfully yours,

"B. F. SHAW."

Colonel Shaw was the interpreter at the Nesqually treaty of 1854, and commanded the Washington Volunteers in the war that followed. He is

one of the most competent Indian scholars in the Northwest, and his statement is entitled to great weight. He is now a member of the state senate of Washington.

“PORT TOWNSEND,  
“JEFFERSON COUNTY,  
“STATE OF WASHINGTON.  
“February 3, 1892. } ”

“Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

“DEAR SIR; Your letter of the 1st inquiring about the origin and meaning of the word ‘Tacoma’ was received this morning. It seems to be impossible for the average white man either to pronounce or write an Indian word correctly. ‘Tacoma’ is the white man’s rendering of the Nesqually and Puyallup word ‘Ta-ho-ma’ or Tah-o-mah,’ with a strong accent on the first syllable. The word means snow mountain or white mountain. The Clallam name for Mount Baker is ‘P’kowitz’ ‘Puhk,’ white, ‘Kowitz’ mountain. The Indian is thoroughly practical in his every day talk. He calls things by their right names without any attempt at poetic imagery. White poets make up their fancy names and descriptions. There are Indian orators who use ornate and poetic language like white orators and poets, but the rank and file of the Indian men and women express themselves in very plain, common talk.

“In the Californian *Illustrated Magazine* No. 2, Vol. 1, January, 1892, is an interesting article by Charles Lummis, entitled, ‘The City of the Sky; Acoma.’ The foot note says this is pronounced ‘Ah-co-ma,’ accent on the first syllable. This is a strange stone island 7000 feet above the level of the sea. Upon the bare table top of this strange island, in the desert, stands a town of matchless interest, the home of half a thousand quaint lives and of half a thousand years romance. This ‘City of the Sky’ is in the western half of New Mexico, thirteen miles south of the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad. My attention was called to it from the similarity of names—‘Ah-co-mah,’ the ‘City of the Sky,’ and ‘Tah-co-mah,’ the ‘snow-covered mountain.’

“Both words, though of different languages, indicate something high up. I do not know that there is any affinity in the languages—the Nesqually, or Puyallup, and the Zuni, but there is an interesting coincidence.

“The late Dr. Wm. Fraser Tolmie, who was stationed at Nesqually as trader for the Hudson Bay Company, in early times, gave great attention to the study of Indian languages, and is considered an authority. He always told me that the word ‘Ta-ho-mah’ means a white, snow-covered mountain.

“The Indian word ‘Quil-ley-hute’ is by the white man spelled and pronounced ‘quillente,’ and so of almost every Indian word, and especially the names of places. When a person can neither pronounce nor spell one Indian word correctly, their florid descriptions of the meaning should be taken *cum grano salis*.

“Very cordially yours,

“JAMES G. SWAN.”

Judge Swan has a reputation second to none on our coast as an ethnologist—his life-long study of our Indians, his labors for the Smithsonian

Institution and his many interesting articles on the Indians of this coast have given him great weight as an authority.

No name shines brighter on the scroll of American philologists and ethnologists than that of George Gibbs. His greatest work, probably, was his "Niskwalli Dictionary," being a thorough examination of the language of that people. He lived in our midst for years, and occupied a prominent position in the early history of the Territory of Washington. His home was in sight of the great mountain, and in his Dictionary, written in 1853, he gives its name as "Takob."

The Tacoma *Morning Globe*, of Sunday, August 3, 1890, contains a very interesting article by John Flett, recently deceased, about the name of the mountain. No one is more competent than Mr. Flett, who came to Puget Sound in 1841, and the following is his language:

"It was no novelty to me to hear the conference between a number of Indians and Hon. Elwood Evans, which occurred in June, 1882, at his law office in New Tacoma, on Pacific Avenue, in the second story of S. M. Nolan's store. That gentleman requested me (I was then employed at the Puyallup Indian reservation) to invite several old reliable Indians to visit him and give him information as to the name among the Indians of the mountain called by the whites 'Mount Rainier.' Before that time, and in fact at the time I first came to the Puget Sound country (1841), I had heard the Indians from the east side of the mountains (the Klickitats) call it 'Ta-ho-ma.' I interpreted for Mr. Evans. He put his questions in English or Chinook jargon. The questions, or his words, were put in native Indian to the old men. The old Indians, in reply to me, said that the name Tahoma applied by them to that mountain, meant a woman's breast or 'pap,' that feeds 'tootoosh' or milk; that the 'earth was their mother, for she had fed them, and Tahoma given them drink, and overflowed and made the grass grow rich from the white water that flowed from her.' I at the time, translated their guttural expressions, which resulted in aggregating the word 'Tahoma,' though really no two Indians pronounced the word exactly alike."

The following is the result of that interview, as given by Judge Evans in his Fourth of July address at Puyallup that year:

"This grand lesson stamped its impress upon the native mind—inspired the Indians' imaginations. It originated for this Colossus among mountains the poetic name of Tak-homa, with a meaning full of poetic significance. Literally translated, 'a woman's breast that feeds.' How aptly is expressed that conical pile of eternal snow, which by the genial heat from heaven's own luminary sends down the waters which feed and enrich so vast a region! How true that thought, how happy that idea, for out of those secret urns in the deep recesses of old Rainier proceed those numerous rivers which fertilize the rich valleys of the Puget Sound basin and the valleys of the Yakima!"

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OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON, Feb. 8, 1892.

"Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

DEAR SIR: Your esteemed favor is at hand asking for information in

regard to the origin of the word Tacoma. I do not think I can enlighten you on the subject. I was at one time superintendent of Indian affairs for the Territory of Washington, and made some effort to get the meaning and origin of Indian words. I think the present word 'Tacoma' is a corruption of the Indian word 'Tacopa,' or 'Ta-co-pe,' which in Indian means white—'Ta-co-pa Illi-he,' or white land. The name, I think, was pretty generally given the mountain by the Indians, particularly by the Nesquallies, Puyallups, Muckleshoots and Squaksons.

"Very truly,

"J. T. McKENNEY."

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Some time ago *Every Sunday* contained a short article on "Tacoma," from which the following is extracted:

"C. P. Ferry (the duke of Tacoma) has not only been a resident of Commencement Bay as long as any other resident, but as an apt scholar he is doubtless more familiar than any one else with mountain nomenclature and fiction legends. On returning from Europe, he was interviewed by a *Globe* reporter, and said, among other things, that about the first thing he heard when he landed was that Seattle was still kicking about the name of Mount Tacoma, and that made him tired. 'Why,' said he, 'I thought that controversy was dead long ago. It is preposterous, the idea of calling that mountain by any other name than Tacoma. The idea that we named the mountain after the city is preposterous. Where do they think we got the name for the city? We didn't invent it. Where had we ever heard it? Why, it was the name of the mountain, and we named the city after the mountain. I named this city and I named it after the mountain. Where did the mountain get the name? Why, the Indians always called it by that name, Ta-ho-ma. When this city had its beginning, all about here was primeval forests; Indians dwelt along this shore and on the shore across Commencement Bay. They all called the mountain Ta-ho-ma. We learned the name from the Indians; that's all there is about it. The name we gave to the city was the nearest expression that English orthography could give to the Indian guttural name Ta-ho-ma. Why, when General McCarver, my father-in-law, laid out the first town-site over in Old Town, he came down to Portland with the plans to draft the papers. He proposed to call it 'Commencement City,' after the bay. I said at once that would never do. The name was not pretty, and it was too big and ungainly; besides, it would open the way to ridicule—just think of naming a town Commencement City! Tahoma, the name of the mountain, popped into my head, and we changed the name to Tacoma. That was the way it was. The city was named in Portland, and it was named after the mountain. And Tacoma is the name of the mountain."

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OLYMPIA, WASH., Feb. 11, 1892.

"Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

"DEAR SIR: In reply to yours of the 1st inst., asking for such information as I can give concerning the origin and meaning of the word Tacoma: Without particularly referring to your several questions, I will say that I have, during my long residence on the Sound, talked with many

people, both Indians and whites, who, from their opportunities, would be likely to know something of the matter, and that from all the information I have been able to gather, I am of the opinion that the word 'Tacoma' is of Indian origin, and that the most extended meaning that can be given to it is 'white mountain.'

"I say 'the most extended meaning' for the reason that I have talked with intelligent Indians, who assert that 'Tacoma' (they generally pronounce it Ta-ho-ma) simply means 'mountain,' and that it applies to any mountain, whether it has snow on it or not. I think, however, that 'white mountain' is the true meaning of the word, for the reasons hereinafter mentioned:

"I conclude that the word is of Indian origin from the fact that the Indians generally, not only upon the Sound, but east of the Cascades, so far as I am informed, recognize it as such, and as the name of 'Mount Rainier,' so-called. And second, because I know of no claim from any quarter that the word, or any word resembling it in sound, of other than Indian origin, was ever applied as the name for that or any other mountain.

"I conclude that the meaning of the word is white mountain. First, because the very best authorities—that is, those who have the best means of informing themselves upon the subject, say that the word means 'white mountain.' And secondly, because Tacoma is pre-eminently a white mountain, and that therefore that is the name which the Indians living within its sight would naturally give it, and the only one which the other tribes of Indians would accept, it being purely descriptive.

"As I have already remarked, the Indians generally, on both sides of the mountains, recognize 'Tacoma' as the name of this particular peak, and it strikes me that they do so because this word is strikingly descriptive of it.

"As Tacoma has been accepted and used as the name of the mountain in question by various tribes of Indians for an indefinite number of years, I, at least, have found it impracticable to determine which tribe used it first. It occurs to me, however, which is a mere matter of conjecture, that places and things generally first receive their names from those who live upon or near them, as probable that the name 'Tacoma' originated with the people living on the Nesqually at the foot of, and in constant view, of said mountain, and that such name was naturally accepted and adopted by other tribes in speaking of the people living at the foot of Mount Tacoma and their country, until it became general, as seems to have been the case with the Indians, as I have pointed out in this matter.

"What generations have come and gone since this mountain was named Tacoma or Tahoma, is, I think, beyond successful human investigation.

"Regretting that I cannot give you more satisfactory information on the subject,

"I am, yours truly,

"FRANCIS HENRY."

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In the *American Anthropologist* for January, 1892, is an article on "Aboriginal Geographic Names," by Rev. Myron Eells, of the Skokomish

Reservation, a high authority on such matters. Mr. Eells says: "Mr. M. W. Walker, who has lived much among the Indians on the east side of the Cascade Mountains, is confident that the word originated among some of those Indians, probably the Tahamas, was originally Tah-ho-ma, and meant 'the gods.'"

In southern Oregon is a tribe of Indians named the "A-cho-ma-wi," and Powers, in "Contributions to *North American Ethnology*," gives the derivation of this name from "A-cho-ma," a river.

The Pima Indians of Arizona call the Gila river "Ack-omah," which is the same pronunciation, spelled differently, as the "Acho-ma-wi" of Oregon use. Add the "t" in either instance and you have Tacoma. The Chinook Indians, an ancient tribe living around the mouth of the Columbia river, called the ocean "Wecoma."

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In the "*Mountains of Oregon*," by W. G. Steele, of the Oregon Alpine Club, at page 55, is an interesting letter from Edwin Eells, United States Indian Agent for the Puyallup and Consolidated Agencies, dated December 8, 1886, in which Mr. Eells says: "The Indian word 'Ta-ko-bet' or Take-man, the first being the most general pronunciation used among the Indians, but both words are used, being the different pronunciation used by the dialects. It means a white mountain, and is a general name for any high, snow-covered or white treeless peak. It is applied to this mountain by the Indians of this vicinity, because it is the only or most prominent one of this kind in the vicinity. They used the word as we would speak of 'the white mountain,' there being but one near us. In the Skadget language the word is a little different, and is there called Ko-ma, and is applied by these Indians to Mount Baker, it being the mountain in that vicinity of the kind. The word squatach, or squat-letsh, is the general name for a range of mountains, while Ta-ko-bet or Ta-ko-man or Ko-ma, is the name of the snow-covered or white peaks in the range."

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P. B. Van Trump, of Yelm, the most indefatigable mountaineer in Washington, whose accomplishments drew from Hon. Elwood Evans the expression of "that splendid scholar and writer, P. B. Van Trump, Esq.," is quoted in the *American Anthropologist*, of January, 1892, in Rev. Myron Eells' article on "Aboriginal Geographic Names," as follows:

"The first Indian I heard pronounce the name of the mountain was old Sluiskin, who guided General Stevens and myself to the snow line when we made the first ascent to the summit in 1870. Sluiskin's pronunciation, as near as I can represent it by letters, was Tah-ho-mah, and in his rendering of it there was, besides its music, an accent of awe and reverence, for Sluiskin was very imaginative and superstitious about Tahoma, believing that its hoary summit was the abode of a powerful spirit, who was the author of its eruptions and avalanches, and who would visit dire vengeance on any mortal who would dare to invade (if that were possible) his dread abode. When Stevens and I were encamped at the foot of the snow line we would often be awakened by the thunder of falling rocks or the deep thud of some avalanche. At such times Sluiskin would

start from his blanket and repeat a dismal, dirge-like song as though he would appease the mountain spirit. Mishell Henry, another old Indian guide to the two-named mountain, prides himself in giving its true name. He has several times drilled me in pronouncing it, always smiling gravely and dignifiedly at my ineffectual attempts to give it his deep chest notes. Henry was the first to mark out the present route to the snow line, and even ascend it for two miles without leaving the saddle. He guided our party (the Bayley party) in 1883, and himself ascended to the 8000-foot level. Beyond that nothing could tempt him, for beyond, in his view, lay danger, folly, rashness; for even Henry, who is intelligent, and much more of a philosopher than the rest of his tribe (the Klickitats), associate the sublime summit of Tahoma with awe, danger and mystery. Your correspondent gives the meaning of 'Tacoma' as 'the mountain.' It is an interesting interpretation, considering the pre-eminence and grandeur of this noble peak. I have questioned the Indians as to their meaning for word Ta-ho-ma. The answer of some showed their ignorance of the meaning. Others, with reticence and suspicion peculiar to the savage mind, were stoically non-committal. One interpretation I have heard given is 'nourishing breasts,' the idea presumably being that the eternal snows of the twin summits have given origin to the streams and have occasioned the glacial deposits that have enriched the valleys, thus nourishing and sustaining vegetable life there just as through the ages the maternal breasts have nourished and sustained the youthful human life."

Sluisin and Henry, mentioned by Mr. Van Trump, were Klickitats, and spoke the Klickitat language. They were of the same race as the guide of Theodore Winthrop, in 1853, and spoke the same name to Van Trump and General Stevens that Winthrop heard before he first wrote the word "Tacoma." Mr. Van Trump's statement is so clear, forcible and elegantly put that it is most convincing evidence.

Miss Fay Fuller, the first lady to reach the summit of Tacoma, and her father, Edward N. Fuller, Esq., have each made an extended study of the mountain, and they have each adopted the Klickitat word as the real name for the mountain.

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TACOMA, WASH., March 4, 1893.

*James Wickersham, Esq., Tacoma, Wash.*

MY DEAR SIR: I came to Steilacoom in 1849 as a member of Company M, Fourth Artillery, Captain Hill. After my discharge I took a donation claim where the Puyallup Indian reservation now is, and have lived in Pierce county ever since 1849. I married my wife Elizabeth in 1849. She was a Puyallup Indian woman, and I lived with her until her death in 1887. I talk the Puyallup-Nesqually Indian language and am familiar with their names for localities in this county.

The Puyallup-Nesqually name for Mount Tacoma has been, to my knowledge since 1849, the word "Ta-co-ba," and has reference to the frozen top of the mountain.

Very respectfully,

JACOB KERSHNER.

Under date of February 22, 1893, P. B. Van Trump, of Yelm, writes concerning the name Tacoma, the reason why so little is known concerning Indian geographical names, and the opposition of Mr. Harvey Scott, editor of the *Oregonian*, to the use of the word Tacoma. "He did not state, however, that he had ever directly questioned the Indians as to what name, *in their own language*, they called the mountain. If he had he would doubtless have so stated in his comments. The Indian (unless since the whites began to call the mountain Tacoma) never uses his own name for the mountain when speaking of it to a white man. If he is speaking in Chinook, which is almost certain to be the case, he will call it "la mountain." To illustrate how unusual it is for an Indian to speak his *dialect* name for the mountain when talking to a white person and to show how natural it was for the Indian in that early day (before 1857 I think) not to mention to Mr. Scott his native name for the mountain, I will mention a fact in my own history and that of my wife. There is an Indian woman now living at Yelm, where she has lived for at least forty years, who is a niece of the chief Owhi, with whom Winthrop negotiated for horses and a guide across the mountains. Now, although I have known this niece of Owhi for more than ten years, have many a time talked with her and traded with her; although my wife has known her for more than thirty years and has always been a great favorite with this descendant of Owhi, yet neither of us heard her speak the Indian name of the mountain until less than a month ago, and then it was in reply to a direct question as to what the Indians call the mountain in their own language. Instantly the reply was "Tacobet," which she said was always the Indian name of the mountain. She had lived so long among the Nesquallies (from infancy no doubt) that she had forgotten, if she ever knew, the Klickitat "Tahoma."

This "niece of Owhi" is quite certainly a cousin to Loolowcan, the Klickitat, the son of Owhi, who acted as Theodore Winthrop's guide in 1853, and from whom Winthrop received the Klickitat word "Tahoma." This word is pronounced with the "h" hard rather as if it were "eh," and with that pronunciation ringing in his ears from the ragged but royal son of Owhi, Winthrop wrote for the first time "Tacoma." May his memory last until that of Tacoma fades!

#### IS IT A MEXICAN WORD?

The Quiches, of Guatemala, tell a wonderful story of the early migration of their race, which will be found in full in Bancroft: *Native Races*, Vol. 3, p. 50. After relating many interesting matters concerning their gods, etc., the story proceeds: "Other people received gods at the same time; and it had been for all a long march to Tulan. Now the Quiches had as yet no fire, and as Tulan was a much colder climate than the happy Eastern land that they had left, they soon began to feel the want of it. The god Tohil, who was the creator of fire, had some in his possession; so to him, as was most natural, the Quiches applied, and Tohil in some way supplied them with fire. But shortly after there fell a great rain that extinguished all the fires of the land; and much hail also fell on the heads of the people; and because of the rain and the hail their fires were utterly

scattered and put out. \* \* Many other trials they also underwent in Tulan, famines and such things, and a general dampness and cold—for the earth was moist, there being as yet no sun. They determined to leave Tulan, and the greater part of them set out to see where they should take up their abode. \* \* Poor wanderers! they had a cruel way to go, many forests to pierce, many stern mountains to overpass and a long passage to make through the sea, along the shingle and pebbles and drifted sand—the sea being, however, parted for their passage.”

It is maintained by some authorities that this is an authentic history of the migration of these people from Asia to America, by way of the Aleutian Islands. That Tulan is Kamtschatka, that the way opened for them through the sea refers to the islands in the route, and that from Alaska they walked the beach—“along the shingle and pebbles and drifted sand” to the prairies west of Mount Tacoma, where they again beheld the sun, when “the three tribal gods, Tohil, Avilix and Hacavitz, were turned into stone.”

Considering the climate of Alaska, the beach, the dense forests, the stern mountains, the hail, the rain, the fogs and clouds, we may well arrive at that conclusion. But this is not all.

The Haida Indians, of Queen Charlotte’s Island, are said to be a branch of the Quiches, dropped on the migration, and that their language, myths and general characteristics have much to prove a relationship with the ancient civilization of Mexico.

Many relics of the Mound-Builders are found on Vancouver’s Island, B. C., and from thence south along the line of this Mongolian migration to Mexico. Bancroft in Vol. 4, “Native Races,” 737-743, gives a full description of these far northern mounds, and these added to the other characteristics of the Haida Indians seems to leave no doubt as to a migration from mound-building Asia to mound-building Mexico by this high road so graphically described in the Quiche legend.

Mrs. H. M. Kunzie, of Seattle, Wash., has, during a long residence on the spot, collected at the mouth of the Umatilla river, Oregon, the very stone gods, Tohil, Avilix and Hacavitz, of the Quiches, or at least exact images of those found in the Quiche region of Guatemala; she has also gathered at the same spot a magnificent collection of Mexican stone relics, including obsidian knives, mortars, calender stone, bronze sword, metates, etc., in short a thoroughly characteristic collection of Mexican antiquities—rare, complete and priceless.

On the shores of Puget Sound, near Whatcom, many similar antiquities have been found; jade implements and ornaments line the route of this migrant colony from Alaska to Mexico, and the proof is adding rapidly to show that this pioneer civilization of America went overland in the shadow of Mount Tacoma, and in full sight of its hoary head, capped with eternal snows and proudly reared above the clouds. That its grand image—its great cone—possibly its then existing volcanic flame—made a lasting impression on these newly arrived Mongolians is not to be doubted.

Did these passing wanderers attach the name Tacoma to this mountain? If now we find that Tacoma was one of their names—if we show

that it is a thorough Mexican name—a noun, and applicable; that it is found in Mexico yet, it will follow that if the migration is possible the naming is equally so.

In the state of Colima, Mexico, is the city of "Tecoman," which has the exact pronunciation given by Mr. Peter Stanup to one of his forms of the Indian name of our mountain.

Not long since the *Ledger* contained the following item: "Since the Mexican Central Railroad from Pueblo to Tecomavaca was opened, no less than 1000 tons of onyx have passed over it."

On the map in the front of Bancroft's "Native Races," Vol. V., giving the country immediately adjacent to the City of Mexico, we find the cities or towns of "Tecaman," and "Acolman," while other forms of the word are common in the Mexican states.

"Acoma, the City of the Sky," is an ancient pueblo in New Mexico. Its unique position on the almost inaccessible summit of a table mountain, many hundred feet high, its age, hazy past, air of mystery and ancient civilization give it an interest second to none in our country; but to us it is of peculiar interest on account of the name, which is pronounced exactly like our Tacoma without the first letter.

One of the principal tribes of the Coahuiltican family of northern Mexico and Southern Texas is the "Tecame," the pronunciation of which differs but little from our word. Evidently the city of "Tecaman" has reference to this tribe also.

In the Seventh Annual Report of Bureau of Ethnology, under the title of the Copelan family, a reference is made to the subtribe "My-acoma" situated in northern California, near the Acho-mawi, from "Acho-ma" or "river" people.

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SAN J. BAUTISTE (Tabasco), Jan. 19, 1893.

*Mr. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.*

MY ESTEEMED SENOR: The contents of your esteemed letter of the 23d of December were of great interest to me, and well deserve that I should devote to it a special amount of time and study. In order, however, that your worship may not wait for my answer, I hasten with pleasure to put myself to discuss the subject of your letter to put your worship at rest, as far as it is possible for me to do so.

Being simply a question of a geographical name of Indian origin, your worship has certainly devoted to it much study at this moment.

The word Tacoma, to which your worship refers, contains a Nahuatl or old Mexican construction (element), which is very characteristic. It claims our attention by it being met with so far north and so distant from the territory which is occupied actually by the tribes that are descended from the primitive stock; and to speak the truth, this circumstance would in the last instance (case), be a new proof (confirmation) of the powerful influence that was once exercised by the people through all the territories over which it ruled, all through which it journeyed, during the long itinerary of its perigrinations.

Therefore, although the word has been much mutilated in the actual

living language, I will, according to the present, expose to your worship my own humble opinions as follows :

(1.) The vowel "A," in the English idiom in the present case, has a sound which is similar to the "E" in the Spanish and of the Nahuatl, and by consequence the first syllable of the words which I shall analyze would be "Te," and the whole word would be "Tecoma."

(2.) This modification established, we obtain a word which has in the Nahuatl idiom the signification "friend at first sight," because as a contraction (apocope) or conjunction of the words "Tecomatl" (Vase of Calabaga, according to Rincon in his work Mexican Art, p. 86, Mex. 1885.)

(3.) Therefore it is very probable that in the word "Tecoma" there are lacking other letters which, when restored, would contribute to give it an acceptable signification ; thus, for example we could decompose it into "Tecomlan," which means heaps of coal; and of the verb "ma," which means to dig (or raise anything from the earth), which conjugated gives "man" and contains the transformations of "Tacoma," "Tecoma" or "Tecomlan," which, rendered into Spanish, means "the place from which you get coal."

As regards the names "Tacobet" and "Tacoma," which have been given by other tribes to the mountain, I am unable to pronounce a sentence.

I have devoted myself to the study of the indigenous languages of the Southern tribes, so could not undertake to analyze words that derive their origin from the living languages of the North, or from any dead languages that have not been mentioned by other historians.

\* \* \* \* \*

Could you have the kindness to place me in relation with some important philological association or academy.

May it please your worship to accept my respects, etc., etc.

JOSE N. ROVIROSA.

[Translated from the Spanish by Dr. Gundlogson, Feb. 8, 1893.]

CITY OF MEXICO, No. 11 AVENIDA BALDERAS, }  
March, 1, 1893. }

Mr. James Wickersham.

DEAR SIR: Your letter of inquiry in regard to Tacoma was received late last night. This morning I took your letter to my friend Prof. Oniedo, and he told me "Tacoma signifies caheza—head. It can be separated into the roots "tete"—stone, and "camite"—a hollow vessel.

There is a village in the valley of Mexico that is called "Tecomitle." "Tecomale" is the name of a tree of the family grape. From the root "teco" are formed many words, as "tecopote," a crabapple tree; "tecote," an owl; "tecomarania," "tlacateco," and signifies "head" or likeness of head.

\* \* \* \* \*

Yours sincerely,  
D. F. WATKINS.

In volume 6, *North American Sylva*, Nuttall, page 74, is a description of the trumpet flower, "Tecoma Radicans," with a foot note by the author,

which reads that the name is "from Tecomaxochitl, the aboriginal Mexican name of one of the species?"

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Many other forms of the word occur in Mexico, even into the territories of the Mayas, all of which is too intricate and dry for an extended examination; sufficient to say that the word Tacoma in its different forms is the most common in the ancient languages of Mexico, and signifies in these various forms a head, a place from whence you get coal, a hollow vessel, a high vine, a trumpet flower, etc. May it also have been applied by these people, in their migrations southward, to the grandest snow-capped volcanic cone in the world? When they reached the meadows of the Nesqually plains—when they had emerged from the forests, mountains and fogs of their long southward journey on the seashore, and saw the sun once more, as it rose over this grand peak, may they not have attached this name to the mountain, which more recently they have given to so many of their towns in ancient Mexico? *Quien Sabe?*

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#### INDIAN NOMENCLATURE.

Many of the myths and traditions told by our Nesqually-Puyallup people are worthy of Greek or Norse mythology. Their religious feelings are natural, deep and fervent, and their music, art and mechanical skill, while rude, have many points of excellence. Their language is capable of fine distinctions. They bestowed names on every little lake, point, bay and camping ground; they had particular names for places and prominent points, but no general names. Thus "Puyallup" was the name of the camp ground on the east side of that river below the reservation, but the river had no name; there were as many names for it as they had camping places along its banks. Each of the prominent peaks in both the Cascade and Olympic ranges had names, but neither of the ranges had; they had names for individuals, but not for classes or systems.

The Indian looked with awe and superstition upon the snowy summit of Tacoma. He visited the base, but never ascended above the snow line. The roar of falling waters, the disintegration of its rocky walls, the loud snapping of its glaciers were to him mysterious, solemn and fearful. Each mat home was filled with stories and traditions concerning it—and yet we are told he had no name for it. Walk, as the writer has, through the forest with a bright Indian, and ask him the names of plants, animals, birds and bugs—everything of common life to him—and you will be surprised at the readiness with which the names follow your questions. I was put to shame at my ignorance of botany by my friend, George Leschi, who, as a boy, followed his father in hostile camps, and who cannot now read or write his name. The Indian language is peculiarly rich in nouns—in names. The Indians had a name for the grand mountain we call Tacoma.

What is the name?

Ask the Indians. Thousands of them yet live in sight of its snowy summit, and are the best witnesses of what the name is. I have asked them, and here are their answers:

"MUD BAY, June 7, 1892.

"We, the undersigned, being Indians born near Mount Tacoma, do say :  
That the mountain was always called by the Nesqually tribe "Tacobet."

EDWARD SMITH, - - - age 29 years.  
GEORGE LESCHI, his [X] mark, age 40 years.  
CHARLIE WALKER, his [X] mark, age 56 years.  
LOUIS YOWALUCH, his [X] mark, age 45 years.  
HARRY, his [X] mark, - - age 50 years.  
JAMES WALKER, his [X] mark, age 53 years.  
JACK SIMMONS, his [X] mark.

"PUYALLUP RESERVATION, Oct. 9, 1892.

"We, the undersigned Indians, belonging to the Puyallup Reservation, do say : That the Nesqually-Puyallup name for Mount Tacoma is "Tacobet." The Klickitat name is "Tahoma." The Indian name for Mount Adams is "Pah-to," and of Mount St. Helens is "Seuck" or "Seuk."

GEORGE LESCHI, his [X] mark, age 40 years.  
BILL JAMES, his [X] mark, - age 39 years.  
JACK SIMMONS, his [X] mark, - age 39 years.  
WILLIAM BOB, his [X] mark, - age 32 years.  
BILL PETOWOW, his [X] mark, - age 49 years.  
GEORGE WALKER, his [X] mark, age 60 years.  
YELM JIM, his [X] mark, - - age 60 years.

October 20, 1892.

"We, being Indians raised near Port Orchard Bay and White River, do say that the Indian name for Mount Tacoma was, ever since we could remember, and always before, called 'Tacobet.' The mountain this side of the great mountain cone is called 'Te-Wauk.' The Olympic mountains are called 'Tu-ad-och Spadit.'

[Signed]: "JACK SIMMONS, his [X] mark, age 39 years."  
"THOS. SIMMONS, his [X] mark, age 60 years."

TACOMA, WASH., Jan. 30, 1893.

"James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

DEAR SIR: The common Puyallup Indian name for the great mountain is 'Takoman' or 'Takoban,' and also called by the Klickitats 'Tachoma.' It is also sometimes referred to as 'Tuwouk,' the head of the Puyallup River.

Respectfully yours,

P. C. STANUP.

SEATTLE, WASH., Jan. 25, 1893.

"I, ANGELINE, THE DAUGHTER OF SEATTLE, DO SAY THAT THE OLD INDIAN NAME FOR THE GREAT MOUNTAIN AT THE HEAD OF THE NESQUALLY IS 'TACOBET,' AND THAT MY FATHER, SEATTLE, ALWAYS CALLED IT BY THAT NAME.

"ANGELINE, HER [X] MARK,  
"DAUGHTER OF SEATTLE."

"ON THIS 25TH DAY OF JANUARY, AT SEATTLE, WASH., ANGELINE, THE DAUGHTER OF CHIEF SEATTLE, SIGNED THE ABOVE PAPER WITH HER MARK,

AFTER IT WAS EXPLAINED TO HER. SHE SAID THAT GOD NAMED THE MOUNTAIN TACOBET, AND ONLY HE COULD CHANGE IT.

JACK SIMMONS, HIS [X] MARK.

TACOMA, MARCH 11, 1893.

I, MOSES SEATTLE, DO SAY THAT I AM THE SON OF JAMES SEATTLE, WHO WAS THE SON OF SEATTLE, CHIEF OF THE DWAMISH TRIBE. I KNOW THE INDIAN NAME OF THE GREAT MOUNTAIN AT THE HEAD OF THE PUYALLUP RIVER. THE INDIAN NAME IS AND ALWAYS WAS TACOBET. MY FATHER AND ALL MY PEOPLE ALWAYS CALLED IT TACOBET. THE INDIAN NAME FOR SEATTLE IS "SEACHL."

MOSES SEATTLE.

This young man, Moses Seattle, wrote the above with his own hand, being a graduate of the Indian school at Forest Grove, Oregon. He is well educated and writes a pretty fair hand; he is quite intelligent and understands as well as any one the importance of what he wrote. He says positively that all the relatives of old Chief Seattle call the mountain TACOBET, and always did so, even before the first white man came into the country. He says, moreover, that there is no such word as "Seattle;" that the word is properly pronounced "Se-achl," and that Tacoma is nearer the true Indian word Tacobet than Seattle is to Se-achl.

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PUYALLUP INDIAN RESERVATION, Jan. 30, 1893.

We, the undersigned, who talk the Puyallup-Nesqually language, do say that the old Indian name for the mountain is "TACOBET," and always was so before the whites came.

MARTHA [X] BILL.  
JANIMY [X] BILL,  
COUR [X] SIMMONS.  
MARY [X] SIMMONS.  
CHARLIE [X] JACKSON.  
SALLY [X] JACKSON.  
MAJOR [X] HAMILTON.  
ELLEN [X] HOWARD.  
JEAN [X] GARRISON.  
JAMES [X] RILEY.  
BILL [X] JAMES.

LUCY [X] SIMONS.  
TEXAS [X] BILL.  
MARY [X] SITWELL.  
GEORGE [X] BIRD.  
MRS. [X] SITWELL.  
BILL [X] MEANNA.  
MRS. [X] MEANNA.  
SALLY [X] MEANNA.  
MRS. [X] OLD JACK.  
CHEHALIS [X] BILL.  
BERSY [X] BILL.  
ALICE [X] JAMES.

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WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, KLICKITAT AND YAKIMA INDIANS, NOW LIVING ON THE YAKIMA RESERVATION, SAY THAT THE OLD INDIAN NAME FOR MOUNT TACOMA IS, AND ALWAYS WAS, "TA-HO-MA."

WILBUR SPENCER.  
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.  
CHARLES WANNASSAY.

I certify that the above Indians signed the above paper after thoroughly understanding it.

JAY LYNCH, United States Indian Agent.

*Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.*

DEAR SIR: According to promise I send you statement from Indians in regard to Indian name for Mount Tacoma, or Rainier.

I have talked with several Indians in regard to this matter, and they say that the Indian name for the mountain is, and always was, "Ta-ho-ma." Wilbur Spencer, son of old Chief Spencer, and the best interpreter and an educated Indian, says the meaning of the word is a "rumbling noise or sound."

The Indian name for Mount Adams is "Pao-too," meaning high, sloping mountain. The Indian name for Mount St. Helens is "Lah-mc-lat-clah," meaning "fire mountain."

Very respectfully yours,

JAY LYNCH, United States Indian Agent.

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In Indian the letter h has the hard sound—almost invariably. The word Tahoma forms no exception to the rule, and it is pronounced as if there was a faint c before the h—"Tachoma." It is usually spelled, however, without the sound of the c, but no one can study the Indian language, compare the sounds, spell the words and write them as in English without being at once struck with this hard sound of the letter h. It has the same pronunciation in Indian that it has in Chinese.

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We, the undersigned, being Indians who talk the Klickitat-Yakima language, do hereby say that the Klickitat-Yakima name for the great mountain, at the head of the Nesqually river, is 'Tach-oma,' and that was the old Indian name for the mountain before the white men came to the country.

"GEORGE LESCHI, his [X] mark.

Son of Chief Quiemuth.

"MRS. NAPOLEON, her [X] mark.

Daughter of Chief Leschi.

"MRS. NAPOLEON.

Daughter of Chief Kitsap.

"WILLIAM CHARLEY.

"MRS. JANNIE CHARLEY.

"BLIND BOB.

"BURNT CHARLEY.

"MRS. BURNT CHARLEY.

"WILLIAM PENIO.

"HARRY TAYLOR.

"MRS. LOUISE TAYLOR.

"HENRY TAYLOR.

"PAUL WYNAGO.

"MRS. YELM JIM.

"MRS. JAMES RILEY.

"JAMES RILEY."

In August, 1853, Theodore Winthrop journeyed from Port Townsend to Squally in a royal canoe of Clallamdom, paddled by the Duke of York and other aristocratically named retainers. At Nesqually he outfitted for a ride to The Dalles, Ore., via the Natchez pass, and was furnished as a guide a young Klickitat brave, the son of Owhi, whose annual journeys to Squally from Yakima meadows made it a familiar trail to him. Across the flower-carpeted plains from Nesqually rode Winthrop, the poet, and Owhi's son; into the dark recesses of the Puyallup forest, wading the unbridged waters of Skamish, over logs, up Alpine heights—but always in the shadow of the great white mountain, so full of mystery to the guide.

The white man was a poet—sensitive, cultured and refined; the Indian, nature's child, superstitious and imaginative; and as they journeyed into this vast solitude, these poetical natures were drawn into close relationship. From Loolowcan, the Klickitat, the son of Owhi, Winthrop heard the name of "Tachoma," and to the fortunate choice of this guide we are indebted for the exact word Tacoma, as it appears in Winthrop's book, "Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1862," but written nine years previously.

A few quotations from the first author to use the exact word "Tacoma" will be peculiarly appropriate at this time, as they bear directly on the subject under discussion. Concerning his journey from Port Townsend to Squally, he writes, on page 43, "Canoe and Saddle:—"

"We had rounded a point, and opened Puyallup Bay, a breadth of sheltered calmness, when I, lifting sleepy eyelids for a dreamy stare about, was suddenly aware of a vast white shadow in the water. What cloud, piled massive on the horizon, could cast an image so sharp in outline, so full of vigorous detail of surface? No cloud, as my stare, no longer dreaming, presently discovered—no cloud, but a cloud compeller.

"It was a giant mountain dome of snow, swelling and seeming to fill the aerial spheres as its image displaced the blue deep of tranquil water. Kingly and alone stood this majesty, without any visible comrade or consort, though far to the north and south its brethren and sisters dominated their realms, each in isolated sovereignty, rising above the pine-darkened sierra of the Cascade mountains, above the stern chasm where the Columbia—Achilles of rivers, sweeps, short-lived and jubilant, to the sea; above the lovely vales of the Willamette and Umpqua. Of all the peaks from California to Fraser River, this one before me was royalest. Mount Regnier, Christians have dubbed it in stupid nomenclature, perpetuating the name of somebody or nobody. More melodiously the Siwashes call it Tacoma, a generic name, also applied to all snow peaks.

"Farthest away in the west, as near the western sea as mountains can stand, are the Cascades. Sailors can descry a land-mark summit, firmer than clouds, a hundred miles away. Kulshan, named Mount Baker by the vulgar, is their northermost buttress up to 49 degrees and Fraser River. Kulshan is an irregular, massive, round-shaped peak, worthy to stand a white emblem of perpetual peace between us and our brother Britons.

"Its name I got from the Lummi tribe at its base, after I had dipped in their pot at a boiled salmon feast. As to Baker, that name should be forgotten. Mountains should not be insulted by being named after undistinguished bipeds nor by the prefix 'Mount.' Mount Chimborazo seems as feeble as Mr. Julius Cæsar."

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Most of the authorities quoted give the meaning of the word Tacoma as "nourishing breast," on account, presumably, of its conical shape. The Yakimas say it means a "rumbling noise," while another version is that it means "the gods." From an intimate examination of the question and from a careful consultation with a large number of Indians, I am satisfied that they have entirely lost the meaning, if ever they had one. No Indian ever made claim, in my presence, that the name had reference to a "nourishing breast" and I am entirely satisfied that that interpretation is fanciful and not real.

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The Nesqually word "tak" means "inland, or away from the water." "Ta" is a Nesqually-Puyallup root and is the base of "this," "that," "what," and "the." "Ta-hats-chebadats" means "the tall tree." "Ta-stub-kate" means "the very top." "Ta-schuck" means "the high," having reference to the sky.

The word "Ko" means water in Nesqually; "ba-ko" or "ma-ko," snow. "ko-ba-shed" means that the feet are frozen; "ko-ba-chi" that the hand is frozen; and "ko-box" that the nose is frozen. "Ko-bat-chid" or "ko-ma-chin" means rainbow.

Here we have "ta" meaning "the;" "ko" meaning "water;" while the last syllable "ma" also has reference to snow; the word "ba" or "ma" is said to mean to scatter—as the snow; and if these sounds and words be properly understood, we have in the word Tacoma a combination having reference to the scattered snow on the mountain top.

Mount Adams is named by the aborigines "Pah-too" and means high, sloping mountain; Mount St. Helens is called "Lah-me-lat-clah" and means "fire mountain." When we consider the shape of Adams, and that St. Helens has actually ejected fire within historic days, these names seem proper, as being descriptive of the characteristic feature of the particular peak. The same is true of the word Tacoma; the cold and silent summit is white with never melting snow; and it is the only mountain of that kind which they had constantly before them. The summer sun cleared the tops of all the other peaks within their range of vision; the Olympics were entirely bare in the height of summer, as were the peaks of the Cascade range so far as they could see; for Adams and St. Helens were hidden behind the range, and also had other names from other reasons. So Tacoma was to them pre-eminently the snow covered mountain.

It is not true, as apparently suggested by many, that Tacoma is a generic term, meaning any snow covered mountain. Mount Baker is named by the Indians "Kulshan;" Mount Adams, "Pah-too," and St. Helens, "Seuq." These names are all distinct, and are never applied to any other mountain. No authority can point to one instance where

"Tacobet" or "Tahoma" has been applied to any other mountain; the mistake arises in the explanation of persons who try to say that Tacoma is a word meaning generally a snow covered mountain. They would not, if cross examined, say that it ever had application to any other mountain than this one; they do not say so; but their explanations are so vague that it leaves a chance for argument which does not exist if the facts are properly understood.

"TACOBET," "TAHOMA," AND "TACOMA" ARE NOT GENERIC TERMS WHICH MAY BE APPLIED INDISCRIMINATELY TO ANY HIGH MOUNTAIN: THEY ARE SIMPLY THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF THE INDIAN NAME FOR MOUNT TACOMA, AND ARE AS SOLELY THE NAME OF THAT ONE MOUNTAIN AS "PAH-TOO" IS OF ADAMS, "SETQ" OF ST. HELENS AND "KULSHAN" OF BAKER.

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#### CONCLUSIONS.

- (1). The Puget Sound Indian name for the mountain is either "Ta-cob-et," "Tacoba," or "Tackob." The "b" in Indian is interchangeable with "m," and hence we also have the forms "Tacoman" and "Tacoban" as given by Mr. Peter Stanup.
- (2). The Yakima-Klickitat name is "Ta-cho-ma," with the "ch" as in German, but most frequently written as "Ta-ho-ma."
- (3). The word means "snow-covered mountain."
- (4). The word "Tacoma" is a fair, honest Indian noun.
- (5). The word "Tacoma" should be preserved as the name of this royal mountain peak, and "Mount Rainier" should be abandoned.

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The special attention of the people of Puget Sound is called to the fact that the reservation made by the President is only a forest reserve. It is not a park, nor is it yet set apart for the public at all. It is a simple withdrawal of that much of the public domain from disposal under the public land laws, and is not intended in any manner for the use of the public. The President has no power to improve it, or to permit others to do so, and each of our citizens going upon the reserve simply becomes a trespasser. It is not open to the public, but by the act of withdrawal it is beyond the power of any citizen to acquire either temporary or permanent rights therein, except by act of Congress.

What we now want is an act of Congress specially setting this apart as a park, donating it to the State of Washington, and providing for its care and custody by the State for the benefit of the public."

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At the close of the paper the Indians present were called upon, and gave verbal testimony concerning the name of the mountain, pronouncing it Tacobet or Tahoma.

General A. V. Kautz, a veteran of the Puyallup war of 1855, who first ascended Mount Tacoma, was present and added the weight of his author-

ity in favor of Tacoma. Lieutenant Van Ogle, also a veteran of 1855 said :

GENTLEMEN : I have not much to say about it. From what I used to learn from the Indians, the name is "Tahoma." One of the chiefs that used to try to teach me Chinook in the early days told me the mountain's name was "Tacobet."

Then came the most interesting part of the proceedings, the talks of the Indians. The younger men all talked fairly good English. The old man Hiaton, who is over 80 years of age, spoke with a good deal of native dignity and deliberateness. His words were translated by George Leschi. He would speak a few words, gesticulating quite freely, and then pause for the interpreter to proceed. Jack Simmons said :

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN : I can't talk to you very much. Always was this mountain here (pointing) called "Tacobet." I think Tacoma is the closest name that white men call. All the La Conner Indians and all over the Sound give you his name "Tacobet."

John Powers rose up and spoke next. Said he :

GENTLEMEN : My mother was an Indian and my father a white man. The only name the mountain is called by Indians is "Tacobet"—"Tacobet," that all the name it called.

George Leschi said :

Well, my good friends, I can't talk much, but the name of the mountain is "Tacobet," and the Klickitats call it "Tahoma." I am about three-quarters Klickitat, balance Nesqually.

The old man, John Hiaton, was then called upon, and was interpreted by Leschi. He first looked all around, and with a dignified gesture said :

I see all the ladies and gentlemen. I am going to call the name of the mountain—the name God gave it. God put me down here before you came here. He put me here for seed—perhaps He sent you here. My people call the mountain "Tacobet"—George, his name (pointing to George); "Tacobet" mountain's name—nobody can change—that is all.

Upon being asked, Jack Simmons, who is a nephew of old Chief Seattle, said that his name was pronounced by the Indians "Se-achl," and not Seattle.

Upon motion the meeting adjourned.

M. S. HILL,  
Secretary T. A. S.

#### JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING.

At a joint committee meeting held May 3, 1893, at which were present George W. Thompson, President of the Chamber of Commerce; E. L. Shafner, Secretary of the Commercial Club; Meriden S. Hill, Secretary of the Tacoma Academy of Science, and Fred G. Plummer, Secretary of the Washington Alpine Club, a resolution was unanimously adopted requesting the Academy of Science to issue a second edition of 3000 copies of Judge Wickersham's paper on the name of Mount Tacoma, with a supplement containing extracts from some of the communications received since the issue of the first edition.

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President Allyn appointed Judge Wickersham, Secretary Meriden S. Hill and Secretary Fred G. Plummer of the Alpine Club to prepare the second edition.

# SUPPLEMENT.

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POYNTERS GROVE,  
TOTTERIDGE, HERTS., }  
March 13, 1893.

*Judge Wickersham, Tacoma.*

DEAR SIR: I have duly received your pamphlet about Mount Rainier, or Tacoma. I think I told you that beyond reading in Vancouver's travels that he had named the striking object Mount Rainier, and the Sound, Puget's Sound, in May, 1792, and that he was my great-uncle, I have nothing of interest to supply, either biographical or pictorial. I quite agree that the name of the mountain should be what it originally bore in times past before Vancouver gave it a new name. Thanking you for your booklet, I remain,

Yours faithfully,

JOHN PUGET, Colonel.

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, }  
No. 1 SAVILLE ROW, }  
BURLINGTON GARDEN, W., }  
April 11, 1893.

DEAR SIR: The secretary desires me to acknowledge your letter of March 15th, and to send you the papers you ask for, with the compliments of the society. He also sends a short paper on mountain nomenclature, in which you will see the views which he has held for some time—views very similar to those you express in your interesting pamphlet on Mt. Tacoma.

Yours sincerely,

HUGH ROBERT MILL,  
Librarian R. G. S.

The Royal Geographical Society of England is the highest of all authorities on geographical matters, including geographical names. Included with the letter of the librarian of the society was a pamphlet prepared by the secretary of the Royal Geographical Society of England, Mr. W. Douglas Freshfield, on the proper name of "Mont Everest," in India.

"Mont Everest," in the Himalayas, is the highest mountain peak in the world, rising 29,000 feet above the level of the sea. The name was bestowed on the mountain in 1856 by Sir Andrew Waugh, and was complimentary to Sir George Everest. Immediately there rose a protest from many eminent geographers, who insisted, very properly, that the native Indian names should have the preference. They protested against the name of even an eminent scholar being attached to the highest mountain in the world, when the natives of the immediate surrounding country had already given it a fitting name.

Several native names came forward. The controversy became almost international, and W. Douglas Freshfield, the secretary of the Royal Geographical Society of England, prepared and read before the society in 1886 an article entitled "Further Notes on 'Mont Everest,'" in which he clearly sets forth the reasons for adopting the native name. His arguments are so clear and convincing, and fit the case of Mount Tacoma vs. Rainier so closely, that it would seem as if it would forever settle the question. The following extracts are taken from his paper in defence of the native Indian name as against "Mont Everest:"

"But here is proof, at any rate, that a native name was used for the group before Everest was assigned to its crowning pinnacle! And I may note also that the adjacent summit has had a native name, Makalu, found for it by the surveyors, despite its situation in the forbidden territory of Nepal, twelve miles less distant.

I have put forward the facts as far as I know them, but I shall hardly be sorry if I fail in my argument, in so far as the assertion that Gaurisanker is the proper name for the great Nepal peak is contained in it. IF I SUCCEED IN SHOWING THAT THE MOUNTAIN HAS AN APPROPRIATE NATIVE NAME I SHALL CONSIDER MY CASE WON. And General Walker has, I consider, proved for me this—the material point at issue—by admitting a native name for the group, the noblest name man can give—Devadhunga, "The Abode of Deity."

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"The true principle of geographical nomenclature is surely that set out by Sir A. Waugh and quoted by General Walker—that local and national appellations should prevail. Travelers are often far too prone to indulge their sentiments or their vanity, to attest their gratitude or their expectation, by engrafting exotic names on natural objects. The first requisite in geographical names is that they should be appropriate; that they should in themselves announce their locality and indicate some natural characteristic or human connection. Where the English race has supplanted its predecessors it has a fair claim to introduce its own names, though not to the extinction of such as already exist. Aorangi (the heaven-piercer) ought to have been left as the title of the loftiest of the New Zealand alps, while Cook found more appropriate commemoration in some cape or harbor. But Mount Darwin and Mount Hooker are not out of place as secondary summits. The "icy privacies" of the Poles offer a very suitable field for the immortalization of sovereigns and sailors. Uninhabited islands lie naturally at the mercy of their first discoverers' imagination—or want of it. But in the historic highlands of Asia, amidst the relics of people and languages that carry us far back in the story of humanity, such inventions as the "Tsar Liberator Mountain," or the "Columbus Range" are too sadly out of place."

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"Practically, perhaps, the matter at issue may seem a very small one—a mere matter of convenience and taste. But ethnologically and historically it has considerable interest. Shall the greatest mountain we know stand forever as a monument of the religious faith of the human race? Or shall the space-searching watchman who looks down over the valleys of

Nepal and the plains of India, light his fires at sunrise, and at sunset to celebrate no greater thought and no higher fame than that of a most meritorious mathematician?"

"Mr. John Ball wrote some years ago: With the highest estimate of the services of General Dufour as director of the admirable Swiss survey, the writer does not believe that the name of any individual can remain permanently attached to the highest peak of the second mountain in Europe."

*Mutatis mutandis.* I adopt these words in the present case; and in what has taken place in Europe we may find a practical and peaceful solution for the similar question that has arisen in Asia. In a few large official maps and Swiss books *Dufourspitze* maintains a somewhat obscure existence; but the great public—"the poets too"—know and will continue to know the mountain as Monte Rosa. What would have happened if Byron, and Coleridge, and Shelley had had to write of Mont Paecard (the suggestion was actually made) or Mont Saussure instead of Mont Blanc? Fancy Tennyson's lines converted into

"How faintly flushed, how phantom fair,  
The Dufour Spitze was hanging there!"

ENGLISH AND FOREIGN GEOGRAPHERS WILL, I STILL THINK, BE WELL ADVISED TO HOLD TO A NATIVE NAME FOR THE HIGHEST MEASURED PEAK, WHETHER GAURISANKAR OR DEVADIUNGA, TIME MUST DECIDE."

Apply the arguments made by the eminent secretary of the Royal Geographical Society of England to the case of Mt. Tacoma—use our local names in his argument—and where do the opponents of "Mount Tacoma" stand? Clearly outside the pale of geographic nomenclature! No better argument can be made for our position than that made by this noble society of English geographers. If England concedes our case, why will not America? If the Royal Geographical Society of England grants that the native name of this noble American peak be retained instead of Rainier, what excuse can the Board on Geographic Names of the United States of America give for holding otherwise?

It isn't even "English, you know."

Extract from a letter written to the *New York Evening Post*, by the distinguished writer and political economist, David S. Wells:

"The name Tacoma has already found favor and is claimed to be of Indian derivation, and if not Indian is strikingly euphonious and ought to be the only one recognized and used by the people of this country."

The *Washington Post* in its editorial of Feb. 9, 1893, said:

"The *Post* has no special interest in the controversy, but is decidedly in favor of retaining the original Indian names, where practicable, for towns and reservations and other places of note instead of immortalizing the names of individuals, Englishmen or otherwise. In this, was the selection to devote upon us, we should be very strongly disposed to call the reservation 'Mount Tacoma Park,' as being musical in itself, and to American ears decidedly more euphonious and agreeable than 'Rainier.'"

Garrett P. Serviss, that wonderful orator, who is now delighting eastern audiences with his eloquent descriptions of western scenery, says, in the *New York Sun*:

"There is no getting around the fact that the only active opposition to the restoration to the grandest American mountain and its beautiful original appellation arises from spite and jealousy directed against the city which has chosen the mountain's name for its own. That, and not Anglo-maniac or a desperately judicial regard for the supposed rights of English "explorers," who, sailing along the shores of a continent, elapped the surnames of their friends at home upon the heads of majestic mountains only seen by them at a distance of 50 or 100 miles, is the real reason why Mount Tacoma cannot possess its name in peace.

Of course "civilized discoverers" have a right to name mountains, and any name that they bestow should, as a general rule, be retained except in one case, and that is when the original name is known. The original name has an inalienable right to precedence, especially when it is not a jaw-breaking string of unpronounceable syllables, but a euphonious and musical word, such as Tacoma certainly is.

Vancouver was not the first "civilized" person to see Tacoma shining like a mighty white thunder cloud above the distant horizon. It was admired by Spanish explorers two years before he saw it, and their charts aided him in navigating the waters of Puget Sound, which, thanks to this same bestower of obscure names on magnificent natural phenomena, is called after Peter Puget, an officer on Vancouver's ship. In fact, Vancouver fairly bespattered this whole region with the names of his friends in England."

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BOSTON, MASS., March 23, 1893.

"*Fred G. Plummer, Esq., Sec'y Washington Alpine Club, Tacoma, Wash.*

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I am glad you are making an effort to preserve Tacoma and the surrounding region as a park, and that the name Tacoma is so well championed, and trust that it will ultimately prevail.

\* \* \* \* \*

Very truly yours,

HAZZARD STEVENS."

General Stevens made the ascent of Tacoma in 1870 with James Longmire and P. B. Van Trump.

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UNION CITY, MASON CO., WASH, April 27, 1893.

"*Hon. James Wickersham.*

DEAR SIR: I ought long ago to have acknowledged the receipt of your pamphlet in regard to the name of Tacoma, and am very glad that you are still agitating that subject. I do not know that I am prejudiced one way or the other about it, but think if my sympathies have been either side in the general rivalry between Seattle and Tacoma they have been with Seattle. That certainly was the case in the early part of the fight between the two places, years ago, though there is less of it now. But,

however that may be, I would like to see the name Tacoma kept on the mountain. I think Tacoma much the best name. My reasons are much the same as those of others—perpetuate the native names when we can, when they are not too hard, and this one is one of the easiest of them. I have sympathized with Seattle in the general fight, as sometimes I thought there was reason in it; but I think Seattle unreasonable in trying to keep Rainier, and so my sympathies are on this point the other way.

Sincerely yours,

M. EELLS."

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The Chicago *Mail* in its issue of May 4th, 1893, said editorially: "The *Mail* is glad to lend itself to the proposition to establish the Indian name of the great mountain near Tacoma, Washington, doing away with the name 'Rainier,' given it by Vancouver in 1792. There is no reason why Tacoma, Mount Tacoma, should not have the preference. The man for whom Vancouver got his appellation was a British vice-admiral of no consequence in history, though he fought against us during the Revolutionary war."

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The editor of the *Archæologist* says in the April number: "It should be the desire of all American people to preserve mementoes of our aboriginal race which is fast disappearing. This can be done only in protecting not alone from destruction their works left behind, but also jealously guarding the names they gave to our mountains, lakes, streams, etc. Why should not then this prominent snow-clad peak have an Indian name forever perpetuated as Mount Tacoma?"

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Henry T. Finck, an author of wide reputation, says in the *New York Nation*: "The name of Tacoma was in use centuries before Vancouver 'discovered' the mountain. The American people will surely right it ultimately. Some years ago an attempt was made to impose the name of a governor of California on the most picturesque of American lakes. To this day packages are sent to 'Lake Bigler;' but to most Californians, and to all tourists, that lake is now known, and always will be known, as Lake Tahoe. And so, too, will it be with Mount Tacoma."

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UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHEOLOGY AND PALEONTOLOGY,  
AMERICAN SECTION. DR. C. C. ABBOTT, CURATOR, }  
PHILADELPHIA, PA., Feb. 18, 1892. }

M. S. Hill, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR: I most heartily sympathize with you in the matter of "names." It seems to me bordering upon outrage to abandon the original names of mountains, rivers and other striking localities, to which the Indians gave not only beautiful but appropriate names, and foist upon them those of modern people who happen to be their "discoverers," or in this way endeavor to perpetuate soldiers', politicians' and others' fame, when often these people have never even seen the places referred to.

Very truly yours,

CHAS. C. ABBOTT.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF THE PACIFIC, }  
SAN FRANCISCO, March 4, 1893. }

*M. S. Hill, Secretary Tacoma Academy of Science, Tacoma, Wash.*

DEAR SIR: I am directed by the Council of the Geographical Society of the Pacific to acknowledge receipt of the February transactions of your Academy, and your letter of February 25, and to express to you the thanks of the Society. The Council considers Judge Wickersham's paper a most interesting document showing as it does that the aboriginal name of the mountain is in all points of view more appropriate than would be any importation from the Old World.

I am, very truly yours,  
T. F. TRENOR, Assist. Secy.

THE MINNESOTA ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES, }  
MINNEAPOLIS, March 7, 1893. }

*Meriden S. Hill, Esq., Secretary Tacoma Academy of Science.*

DEAR SIR: We are in receipt of your very interesting "proceedings," for which please accept cordial thanks. It is a matter of much interest to me, and should be, I think, to all, that the old local names, especially those given and used by the primitive inhabitants, should be retained. They should indeed be held measurably sacred to the memory of the people who have passed or are passing away. They are usually significant and euphonious—more so than "Tom, Dick or Harry," or even "Rainier." I hope you will succeed in impressing upon the powers that be the manifest propriety of affixing the title "Tacoma" to any document referring to the mountain officially.

Very truly yours,  
W. H. PRATT, Cor. Secy.

ALBANY INSTITUTE, }  
ALBANY, N. Y., March 14, 1893. }

DEAR SIR: I am directed by the Albany Institute to express its thanks for the pamphlet on the name of Mount Tacoma. You are right beyond all question. The native local nomenclature should be adopted by the conquering nation unless a name embraces sounds or combinations of letters unmanageable by the new-comers. I beg to assure you that the Society duly appreciates this mark of consideration.

I remain, very respectfully yours,  
GEORGE ROGERS HOWELL,  
Recording Secretary.

*To M. S. Hill, Secretary Tacoma Academy of Science.*

THE ONEIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, }  
UTICA, N. Y., March 15, 1893. }

*Mr. M. S. Hill, Recording Secretary, Etc.*

DEAR SIR: Your communication was read by me yesterday, at a regular meeting of this society, and its contents received consideration. It is quite true that much interest has been manifested by us in the name of Mount Tacoma, and we do sincerely hope that this name will be preserved, not only for the mountain, but also for the park. As a tract of

land surrounding Mount Tacoma has recently been set apart, as a government reserve, for a public park, this subject becomes a matter of national interest and importance, and the proceedings of the Academy show very conclusively that the name which the mountain now bears was the earliest name, which name should certainly be continued. It is to be hoped that action by Congress will be taken favorable to this name, at an early day, and if any aid can be rendered in this direction do not hesitate to call upon us.

I am, yours faithfully,

CHARLES W. DARLING,  
Corresponding Secretary.

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, }  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM, }  
WASHINGTON, March 18, 1893. }

*M. S. Hill, Secretary.*

DEAR SIR: I have received your publication in relation to Mount Tacoma, and am entirely in accord with the proposition to restore the original and euphonious aboriginal name to the fine peak to which it belongs. I believe in retaining the aboriginal names in every case where they are euphonious and clearly established, rather than inapplicable subsequent names which chance and the first explorers happened to use, unless the latter have become universally current.

Yours very truly,

WM. H. DALL.

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KANSAS STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, }  
MANHATTAN, KAS., March 18, 1893. }

*M. S. Hill, Esq., Secretary Tacoma Academy of Science, Tacoma, Washington.*

DEAR SIR: I take pleasure in acknowledging herewith the receipt of the proceedings of your Academy for Feb. 6, 1893, and have examined it with considerable interest. It always seemed to me highly appropriate to preserve aboriginal geographical names wherever possible. I should therefore be much pleased to see Tacoma recognized as the name for your mountain. Certainly the name Rainier has no such connection with our past or present history as to give it much claim to our defence.

Yours respectfully,

J. T. WILLARD,  
Pres. Scientific Club, K. S. A. C.

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D. C. }  
March 28th, 1893. }

*M. S. Hill, Secretary Tacoma Academy of Science, Tacoma, Wash.*

DEAR SIR: Accept my thanks for the interesting brochure you have sent me concerning the famous mountain. You certainly make out a strong case for Tacoma vs. Rainier, and I shall be glad to assist you by all means in my power to secure the rightful restoration.

Very truly yours,

ELLIOTT COUES.

PEORIA SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION, }  
PEORIA, ILL., April 28, 1893. }

*To the Tacoma Academy of Science.*

We, the undersigned, having been appointed by the Peoria Association to convey our interest to the Tacoma Academy do therefore resolve:

That we heartily sympathize with the Tacoma Academy in its effort to fix the word "Tacoma" as a name for the beautiful mountain.

That we urge upon our Association its co-operation in trying to secure the reserve land adjacent for purposes of a national park.

That we believe this to be a matter of national interest and worthy of the utmost effort on the part of all scientists and public-spirited people.

[Signed]

H. B. HOPKINS,

H. W. WELLS,

ALICE BARNHART,

Committee.

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TACOMA, WASH., July 1, 1893.

*Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma.*

MY DEAR SIR: In response to the request contained in your favor of June 30th, it gives me pleasure to enclose map of Mount Tacoma corrected by best information received up to date. For comparison I enclose copy of map of Mount Blanc taken from LeContes Geology. Both maps are to the same scale and give an idea of the size of Tacoma.

Answering your inquiry regarding the name of the mountain, would say that this club has endorsed the word "Tacoma," as its spelling is as near as any can be to the Indian pronunciation.

From triangulations made this spring, I am of the opinion that the mountain is 15,000 feet high, and not 14,444 as is commonly reported. This would make it the highest mountain in the United States.

Very truly,

FRED. G. PLUMMER,

Secretary Washington Alpine Club.

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Monsignor Satolli, the official representative of the Pope, in closing his address at the Tacoma hotel on Sunday, July 2nd, said (by his interpreter): "Again the Monsignor thanks you for this large reception. He wishes to say finally that he knows the grand mountain which towers over the whole Sound, has for its true name—TACOMA."

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON REVISION.

June 25, 1893.

*Hon. Frank Allyn, President.*

Your special committee on the printing of the second edition of the paper entitled "Is it Mount Tacoma or Rainier?" respectfully submits the foregoing.

JAMES WICKERSHAM, Chairman.

MERIDEN S. HILL.

FRED G. PLUMMER.



MAP OF THE GLACIERS OF MOUNT BLANC.



MAP OF THE GLACIERS OF MOUNT TACOMA.





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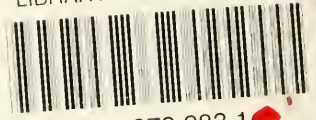


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